



Using Cooperative Learning Strategy to Improve Writing Skills of Grade Ten Students of Senior High School

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to find out if using Cooperative Learning Strategy can improve students' writing skills of grade ten students at Senior High School. The researcher applied quasi-experimental design with two classes, experimental class and control class. The experimental class consisted of 34 students and control class consisted of 35 students selected through cluster random sampling technique. In collecting data, the researcher administered pretest and posttest to both the experimental class and control class. The data were analyzed statistically in order to find out the significant difference of students' achievement before and after treatments. Using 0.025 level of significance and 67 degrees of freedom (df), the researcher found that the value of t-table was 1.998, which was lower than the t-counted 3.57. It means that the hypothesis is accepted. In other words, using Cooperative Learning Strategy can improve students' writing skills.

Keywords: Cooperative Learning Strategy, Writing Skills.

Introduction

Writing skill is one of the language skills that English as a second or foreign language learners need to master. This is the activity of conveying ideas or messages in written form. It involves various linguistic elements such as spelling, grammar, vocabulary, context and punctuation (Astiantih & Akfan, 2023). This demonstrates that writing is a difficult skill to master. Therefore, good writing skills are needed so that students can write well and systematically.

Writing skill is essential for students as they serve as a fundamental tool for effective communication and learning that across all academic disciplines and beyond. It is a crucial skill to support students' activities in exploring and developing an idea, knowledge, and experience (Megawati, 2020). Having good

skill in writing enables students to express their ideas, thoughts, and understanding of subject matter clearly and coherently. It fosters critical thinking and structured organization of information, which are essential for academic success. Furthermore, writing allows students to engage in self-expression, creativity, and enables them to communicate their perspectives and insights with others.

It is mentioned in Kurikulum Merdeka that there are several kinds of text taught at the senior high school and one of them is descriptive text. In learning descriptive text, students have to describe people, things, and places. They are supposed to know information about the thing being described including its name, nature, and function. They have to pay closer attention to detail while describing objects using proper grammar (Yoandita, 2019). Thus, students can organize ideas in good sentences and paragraphs.

With all the advantages possessed by cooperative learning strategies, this research aims to find out whether this strategy can improve the students' writing skills of Senior High School. As the results of preliminary research showed that the students got difficulty in writing descriptive text. Several factors contributed to the difficulty. First, they were lacking of vocabulary and this made them find it difficult to put ideas into writing. They were also poor in grammar and writing mechanisms. To deal with the obstacles, the researcher used Cooperative Learning Strategy to experiment the effect on students' writing skills. She formulates a research question: "Does using Cooperative Learning Strategy improve writing skills of grade ten students of Senior High School?"

Method

This researcher applied a quasi-experimental research design. Quasi-experimental design aims to find out the relationship between variables involving an experimental group and a control group. Both groups used pretest and posttest to measure participants' abilities. However, treatment was only given to the experimental class, while the control class did not receive treatment but used the strategy applied by the teacher.

This study involved grade ten students of Senior High School which consist of 10 classes. Each class consists of 34 to 36 students. The total number of the students is 355. To select the samples of this study, the researcher applied cluster random sampling technique due to the relatively short research time and the large number of grade ten students of Senior High School. This study consists of two variables. They are dependent variable and independent variable. Dependent variable is the writing skills of grade ten students of Senior High School, while the independent variable is Cooperative Learning Strategy. In this case, the independent variable is a strategy that researcher uses to improve students' writing skills. This study used paper-and-pencil method to collect data. The technique is equipped with test as the instrument. The test consisted of pretest and

posttest. The researcher gave the pretest and the posttest to both experiment class and control class.

Results

Individual student scores obtained from the pre-test were calculated statistically and it was found that experimental class had a mean score of 31.62, while the control class had a mean score of 35.48. To assess the effectiveness of the strategy used, the students individual score on the posttest was required. The results showed that a mean score of the experimental class was 51.47 and the control class was 45.24. The deviation scores used to compare students' pre-test and post-test results. After determining the deviation, the mean deviation was analyzed. The deviation and squared deviation for both classes are provided below.

Table 1. The result of pretest and posttest of experimental and control group (Descriptive statistics)

Group	N	Variable	Mean Score	Std. Dev.
Experimental	34	Pretest	31.62	19.85
		Posttest	51.47	
Control	35	Pretest	35.48	9.76
		Posttest	45.24	

By applying the 0.025 level of significance and 67 degrees of freedom (df), it is found that the t-table value is 1.998. The t-counted value of 3.57 is greater than the t-table value of 1.998, indicating the implementation of cooperative leaning strategy is said to be effective in improving writing skills of the sampled students. The following table summarizes the differential test results (test t).

Table 2. Differential test t (Inferential statistics)

df (N-2)	67
MD	10.09
Tcounted	3.57
Ttable (one-tailed)	1.998

Discussion

This study aimed to determine if using Cooperative Learning Strategy can improve students writing skills of grade ten students of Senior High School. The result showed that there was a significant difference in the students' scores before and after the treatment using Cooperative Learning Strategy. It means, Cooperative Learning Strategy can solve the students' problems, as mentioned in the introduction, that they got difficulty in writing descriptive text, especially on three aspects of writing. They are vocabulary, grammar and mechanics of writing.

The implementation of a Cooperative Learning Strategy is successful since it

has many advantages. It can foster a sense of community and cooperation among students, as well as give them the opportunity to master new skills (Phan, 2023). It emphasizes collaboration among students to achieve shared learning goals. In group assignments, each group member must collaborate and assist each other in understanding the topic matter (Yuliani, Normilawati, Andani and Aulia, 2021). In addition, students can help each other if in one group there are students who have difficulty understanding the material.

The findings supported the previous studies by (Shammout, 2020; Yusuf, Jusoh, Yusuf, 2019) who reported that using Cooperative Learning Strategy can improve writing skills of senior high school students. Cooperative Learning Strategy can improve students' writing skills because it enables individuals with different characteristics to learn together in groups, working towards a common objective and supporting each other (Pullu, 2023). It emphasizes the development of students' critical thinking and logical reasoning skills throughout their English writing, promoting active classroom engagement and instilling a sense of pleasure in learning (Ren, 2023). Furthermore, it can help students stay motivated and interested in their learning. Thus, Cooperative Learning Strategy can be an effective strategy for teaching students in writing.

However, in cooperative learning strategies, some students may rely on more capable group members, thereby limiting opportunities for other students to learn and contribute. This can lead to a lack of engagement and participation among less capable group members, potentially hindering their overall learning experience. Besides, this lack of engagement and participation can also negatively impact the writing skills of less capable group members, as they may not receive sufficient opportunities to practice and develop their writing skills. Therefore, teachers should monitor the group work process and encourage students to be active in group work. Additionally, encouraging students to share responsibilities can enable students to contribute effectively and enhance team quality.

Regardless of limitation, findings of this study have an important implication for teacher in teaching English. This research can be a basis for developing materials and curricula that are more focused on cooperative writing learning. Teachers can develop additional resources, assignments, and projects specifically designed to utilize cooperative strategies to improve students' writing skills.

Conclusion

Using Cooperative Learning Strategy can improve writing skills of the sampled grade ten students at Senior High School. The t-counted value (3.57) exceeds the t-table value (1.998). The t-counted value is higher than the t-table value; as a result, the research hypothesis is accepted. In other words, using the Cooperative Learning Strategy has a positive effect on students' writing skills of the sampled grade ten students at Senior High School.

Based on the limitation of this study, the researcher gives several suggestions.

Firstly, ensure that grouping is done considering the skill levels and learning needs of each group member. This way, more capable group members can assist those who are less capable without usurping the role of the teacher. Then, assign different roles in each group task so that every member has the opportunity to contribute and learn from diverse roles.

In the other hand, English teachers who wish to effectively teach descriptive writing can utilize this strategy since it helps students develop their skills to write descriptive text. Then, for future researchers who are interested in undertaking the same study must expand their expertise in order to gain a greater benefit from the research results. The researcher hopes that the research findings can serve as a starting point for future researchers who face similar challenges, and that this research can be used as a reference.

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